



**[4910-13-P]**

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Federal Aviation Administration**

**14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2013-0539; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-145-AD]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

**Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** We propose to supersede airworthiness directive (AD) 2000-12-11, that applies to certain Model A300 B4-600 and Model A300 B4-600R series airplanes. That AD currently requires repetitive inspections to detect cracks in the bolt holes inboard and outboard of rib 9 on the bottom booms of the front and rear wing spars, and repair if necessary. Since we issued that AD, we have determined through a fleet survey and an updated fatigue and damage tolerance analysis that the risk for fatigue cracking on the front and rear spar bottom booms is higher than was initially determined. This proposed AD would reduce the initial inspection compliance time and repetitive inspection interval. We are proposing this AD to detect and correct fatigue cracks in the bolt holes of the wing spars, which could result in reduced structural integrity of a wing spar.

**DATES:** We must receive comments on this proposed AD by **[INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax: (202) 493-2251.
- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.
- Hand Delivery: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Airbus SAS – EAW (Airworthiness Office), 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 44 51; email [account.airworth-eas@airbus.com](mailto:account.airworth-eas@airbus.com); Internet <http://www.airbus.com>. You may review copies of the referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

### **Examining the AD Docket**

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Operations office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the

regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Operations office (telephone (800) 647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; phone: (425) 227-2125; fax: (425) 227-1149.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Comments Invited**

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposed AD. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2013-0539; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-145-AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposed AD based on those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

**Discussion**

On June 9, 2000, we issued AD 2000-12-11, Amendment 39-11789 (65 FR 37853, June 19, 2000). That AD requires actions intended to address an unsafe condition

on the products listed above.

Since we issued AD 2000-12-11, the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Community, has issued EASA Airworthiness Directive 2012-0138, dated July 26, 2012 (referred to after this as the Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information, or “the MCAI”), to correct an unsafe condition for the specified products. The MCAI states:

Full fatigue tests carried out by the manufacturer revealed crack initiation from the bolts holes at inboard and outboard of rib 9, on the front and rear spar bottom booms. Similar cracks at the same area were reported by A300-600 aeroplane operators.

This condition, if not detected and corrected, could affect the structural integrity of the aeroplane.

To address this unsafe condition, [Direction Générale de l’Aviation Civile] DGAC France issued AD 94-208-169(B)R2 [which corresponds to FAA AD 95-07-05 Amendment 39-9187 (60 FR 17990, April 10, 1995)] to require an ultrasonic inspection of holes inboard and outboard of rib 9 on the front and rear spar bottom booms on Left Hand and Right Hand wings.

Since that [DGAC] AD was issued, a fleet survey and updated Fatigue and Damage Tolerance analysis have been performed in order to substantiate the second A300-600 Extended Service Goal (ESG2) exercise. The results of these analyses have shown that the risk for these aeroplanes is higher than initially determined and that, consequently, the inspection threshold and interval must be reduced to allow timely detection of cracks and the accomplishment of an applicable corrective action [and related investigative action].

For the reasons explained above, this new [EASA] AD retains the requirements of DGAC France AD 94-208-169(B)R2, which is superseded, and requires the accomplishment instructions within the new thresholds and

intervals specified in Revision 04 of Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin (SB) A300-57-6037 [dated February 24, 2011].

The related investigative action includes doing inspections for cracking. The corrective actions include oversizing holes and installing new fasteners, and for certain conditions, contacting the FAA or EASA (or its delegated agent) for instructions. You may obtain further information by examining the MCAI in the AD docket.

#### **Relevant Service Information**

Airbus has issued Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, Revision 04, dated February 24, 2011. The actions described in this service information are intended to correct the unsafe condition identified in the MCAI.

#### **FAA's Determination and Requirements of This Proposed AD**

This product has been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and is approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to our bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, we have been notified of the unsafe condition described in the MCAI and service information referenced above. We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all pertinent information and determined an unsafe condition exists and is likely to exist or develop on other products of the same type design.

#### **Differences Between This AD and the MCAI or Service Information**

Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, Revision 04, dated February 24, 2011, specifies to contact the manufacturer for instructions on how to repair certain conditions, but this proposed AD would require repairing those conditions using a method approved by the FAA or the EASA (or its delegated agent). In light of the type of

repair that would be required to address the unsafe condition, and consistent with existing bilateral airworthiness agreements, we have determined that, for this proposed AD, a repair approved by the FAA or the EASA (or its delegated agent) would be acceptable for compliance with this proposed AD.

### **Costs of Compliance**

Based on the service information, we estimate that this proposed AD would affect about 29 products of U.S. registry.

We estimate that it would take about 18 work-hours per product to comply with the new basic requirements of this proposed AD. The average labor rate is \$85 per work-hour. Required parts would cost about \$2,874 per product. Where the service information lists required parts costs that are covered under warranty, we have assumed that there will be no charge for these parts. As we do not control warranty coverage for affected parties, some parties may incur costs higher than estimated here. Based on these figures, we estimate the cost of the proposed AD on U.S. operators to be \$127,716, or \$4,404 per product.

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide cost estimates for the on-condition actions specified in this proposed AD.

### **Authority for This Rulemaking**

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. "Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs," describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in “Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements.” Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

### **Regulatory Findings**

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

1. Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866;
2. Is not a “significant rule” under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979);
3. Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska; and
4. Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

We prepared a regulatory evaluation of the estimated costs to comply with this proposed AD and placed it in the AD docket.

## **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

### **The Proposed Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

### **PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES**

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

#### **§ 39.13 [Amended]**

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by removing airworthiness directive (AD) 2000-12-11, Amendment 39-11789 (65 FR 37853, June 19, 2000), and adding the following new AD:

**Airbus:** Docket No. FAA-2013-0539; Directorate Identifier 2012-NM-145-AD.

#### **(a) Comments Due Date**

We must receive comments by **[INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

#### **(b) Affected ADs**

This AD supersedes AD 2000-12-11, Amendment 39-11789 (65 FR 37853, June 19, 2000).



**(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to Airbus Model A300 B4-601, B4-603, B4-620, B4-622, B4-605R and B4-622R airplanes; certificated in any category; all manufacturer serial numbers, except airplanes on which Airbus Modification 10161 has been incorporated in production.

**(d) Subject**

Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 57, Wings.

**(e) Reason**

This AD was prompted by a fleet survey and an updated fatigue and damage tolerance analysis indicating a high risk for fatigue cracking on the front and rear spar bottom booms. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct fatigue cracks in the bolt holes of the wing spars, which could result in reduced structural integrity of a wing spar.

**(f) Compliance**

You are responsible for having the actions required by this AD performed within the compliance times specified, unless the actions have already been done.

**(g) Repetitive Inspections**

At the applicable time specified in paragraph (g)(1) or (g)(2) of this AD: Perform an ultrasonic inspection to detect fatigue cracking of the bolt holes inboard and outboard of rib 9 on the bottom booms of the front and rear wing spars, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instruction of Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, Revision 04, dated February 24, 2011, except as specified in paragraph (k) of this AD.

Repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed the applicable time specified in paragraph (h) of this AD.

(1) For normal range airplanes, at the later of the times in paragraphs (g)(1)(i) and (g)(1)(ii) of this AD.

(i) Within 14,100 flight cycles or 30,400 flight hours since airplane first flight or within 14,100 flight cycles or 30,400 flight hours since airplane modification done as specified in the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A300-57-6039, whichever occurs first.

(ii) Within 1,600 flight cycles or 3,400 flight hours, whichever occurs first after the effective date of this AD.

(2) For short range airplanes, at the later of the times in paragraphs (g)(2)(i) and (g)(2)(ii) of this AD.

(i) Within 15,200 flight cycles or 22,800 flight hours since airplane first flight, or since airplane modification done as specified in the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Service Bulletin A300-57-6039, whichever occurs first.

(ii) Within 1,700 flight cycles or 2,500 flight hours, whichever occurs first after the effective date of this AD.

**(h) Repetitive Inspection Compliance Times**

At the applicable time specified in paragraph (h)(1) or (h)(2) of this AD, repeat the inspection required by paragraph (g) of this AD.

(1) For normal range airplanes: Repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 3,900 flight cycles or 8,400 flight hours, whichever occurs first.

(2) For short range airplanes: Repeat the inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 4,200 flight cycles or 6,300 flight hours, whichever occurs first.

**(i) Corrective Action for Cracking**

If any crack is found during any inspection required by paragraph (g) of this AD: Before further flight, repair the cracking including applicable related investigative and corrective actions, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, Revision 04, dated February 24, 2011, except as specified in paragraph (k) of this AD. Do related investigative and corrective actions before further flight. Thereafter, repeat the inspection required by paragraph (g) of this AD at intervals not to exceed the applicable time specified in paragraph (h) of this AD. Corrective actions required by this paragraph do not constitute terminating action for the repetitive inspections required by paragraph (h) of this AD.

**(j) Definition of Short Range and Long Range Airplanes**

For purposes of this AD, short range airplanes are those with an average flight time lower than 1.5 flight hours, and normal range airplanes are those with an average flight time equal to or higher than 1.5 flight hours.

**(k) Exception to Service Information**

Where the Accomplishment Instructions of Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, Revision 04, dated February 24, 2011, specify contacting Airbus for an approved repair: Before further flight, contact either the Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) (or its delegated agent), for instructions and do those instructions.

**(l) Credit for Previous Actions**

This paragraph provides credit for actions required by paragraphs (g) and (h) of this AD, if those actions were performed before the effective date of this AD using any of the service bulletins specified in paragraphs (l)(1) through (l)(4) of this AD.

(1) Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, dated August 1, 1994.

(2) Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, Revision 01, dated August 31, 1995.

(3) Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, Revision 02, dated January 9, 2001.

(4) Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, Revision 03, dated January 11, 2002.

**(m) Other FAA AD Provisions**

The following provisions also apply to this AD:

**(1) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs):** The Manager, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the International Branch, send it to ATTN: Dan Rodina, Aerospace Engineer, International Branch, ANM-116, Transport Airplane Directorate, FAA, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA 98057-3356; phone: (425) 227-2125; fax: (425) 227-1149. Information may be emailed to: [9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov](mailto:9-ANM-116-AMOC-REQUESTS@faa.gov). Before using any approved

AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office. The AMOC approval letter must specifically reference this AD.

**(2) Airworthy Product:** For any requirement in this AD to obtain corrective actions from a manufacturer or other source, use these actions if they are FAA-approved. Corrective actions are considered FAA-approved if they are approved by the State of Design Authority (or their delegated agent). You are required to assure the product is airworthy before it is returned to service.

**(3) AMOCs Approved Previously:** AMOCs approved previously in accordance with AD 2000-12-11, Amendment 39-11789 (65 FR 37853, June 19, 2000), are approved as AMOCs for the corresponding provisions of this AD.

**(n) Related Information**

(1) Refer to Mandatory Continuing Airworthiness Information European Aviation Safety Agency Airworthiness Directive 2012-0138, dated July 26, 2012, and the service information specified in paragraphs (m)(1)(i) through (m)(1)(iii) of this AD; for related information.

(i) Airbus Mandatory Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, Revision 04, dated February 24, 2011.

(ii) Airbus Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, dated August 1, 1994.

(iii) Airbus Service Bulletin A300-57-6037, Revision 01, dated August 31, 1995.

(2) For service information identified in this AD, contact Airbus SAS – EAW (Airworthiness Office), 1 Rond Point Maurice Bellonte, 31707 Blagnac Cedex, France; telephone +33 5 61 93 36 96; fax +33 5 61 93 44 51; email [account.airworth-eas@airbus.com](mailto:account.airworth-eas@airbus.com); Internet <http://www.airbus.com>. You may review copies of the referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, WA. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on June 18, 2013.

John Piccola,  
Acting Manager,  
Transport Airplane Directorate,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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